

## MARTIN FORD SR. AND ZIBIAH MERIBA STOKER

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A strange man appeared at the door and

938

## WALLSBURG BIOGRAPHIES



asked them if they had any sickness in the home. Little Martin's father told him his boy had fallen into a tub of hot water and scalded himself. The stranger told him to take the fresh lard of a pig (he told him what to mix it with) and put on the boy and he would be all right. He then turned and left.

They looked out to see which direction the man was going, but he was nowhere in sight. He hadn't had time to get out of sight. They didn't know where he came from or where he went, but Martin's father went out and killed a pig and did as the man told him, and the burns healed.

That night all the stars in the sky fell. Martin's father carried him out-of-doors so he could watch them fall. My grandfather never forgot that night, and he often told us about it.

Martin Ford Sr. was born in Harmony, Chautauqua County, New York, on April 16, 1832, son of William Ford Sr. of Windham County, Connecticut, and Hannah Lucile Mayo of Berkshire County, Massachusetts. At Trader's Point, on the Missouri River, six miles from Council Bluffs, he became acquainted with and married Zibiah Meriba Stoker about 1852. She was born August 13, 1829, daughter of John W. Stoker and Sarah McDaniel. Zibiah died in Wallsburg on July 20, 1902, and Martin died May 16, 1919.

Soon after Martin Sr.'s birth his parents moved to Nauvoo, where William worked on the temple until it was nearly completed. One day the scaffold on which he was standing broke and he fell about 20 feet, injuring him so he died soon after, leaving a wife and six children. Martin, just 12 years old, was their only support. They were living in Nauvoo when Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed by the mob and when

the saints were driven from their homes.

Martin was baptized into the Church by Sidney Rigdon. After the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum, Martin bought a yoke of cattle and a wagon. The next spring he and the family left Nauvoo and started west with the second company of saints. They suffered much from the cold, stormy weather. They arrived at Mt. Pisgah, Iowa, and stayed during the summer while Martin worked to buy food enough for the next trip. Then they traveled to the Sweetwater in Iowa, where they stayed till the following spring, when they left on their westward journey, finally reaching Council Bluffs, Iowa, on the Missouri River. They moved six miles south to a place called Trader's Point. Martin was about 20 years old now. He worked here three or four years hauling logs for steamboats.

Here he met his future wife Zibiah Stoker, and they were married. Two children were born at Trader's Point. Early in 1856 they moved back to Council Bluffs, where two more children were born.

At this time the rebellion between the North and South was raging. John, the oldest, remembered the soldiers marching past their home.

In the spring of 1862, Martin had planted 40 acres of corn. He was plowing ground to plant more, when he put aside his plow and went to the house and told Zibiah to "start packing, we are going to the Rockies." Next day he sold his crop, bought a yoke of cattle, a yoke of cows and one team of horses. They went to Council Bluffs on the Fourth of July. After securing their supplies for the trip, they crossed the river, where others were making up a train to continue on the journey west.

They decided the train was too long, so appointed another captain, whose name was Woolley. Martin was appointed assistant captain. As they proceeded, wagons broke down and were pulled out of the train. Martin was called to repair them, for he was a carpenter and a wheelwright. So he was kept busy most of the time repairing wagons. Zibiah and her young son John had to drive the wagons all the way across the plains, and when Zibiah was tending the children, John did it alone. He was nine years old then. There were 40 wagons and 150 people in the train.

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Church was held on Sunday and whenever they came to a grassy spot they would have a dance. Martin played the violin and they'd dance the "Money Musk" till the dancers couldn't be seen for dust.

The trip was made without incident, except that John's brother William, four years old, was determined to ride like John, with his legs over the front end gate. The wheels dropped in a ditch and he fell down between the horses and a wheel ran over his middle finger, cutting it open. Soon they were in the beautiful mountains. People, cattle and horses were weary as they came out of Emigration Canyon to look over Salt Lake Valley and Great Salt Lake.

They camped where the City and County Building now is. The company disbanded and the Fords went to Provo, where Martin bought a farm on Center St., across from where a cannery later was located. Later he homesteaded in Wallsburg, where the old home still stands.

They spent all their lives pioneering.

Children of Martin Ford: John Ford, Hannah Jane F., Lady Ford, William Ford, Alfred Ford, Mary Etta, Coquella, Martin Ford Jr., Parley Ford and Daisy Pearl Ford.



*People, Places and Events*

When events occur for the first time or when people achieve new things there is usually popular acclaim to remember the events or the people. There are many memorable "firsts" in Wallsburg, including the following:

The first school house and church building was constructed inside the fort area and Mrs. Lucina M. Boren was the first school teacher. The first school house outside the fort was the home of Martin Ford, and the first regular school building was on the property of George L. Batty. Miss Josephine Wall was teacher in 1859. Teachers who came to these first schools lived in the homes of Jennie Allred, Susan Davis, Amber Ford and Mrs. John Graham.

Some of the first musicians that played for dances were William Bancroft, dulcimer; George Allred, Amber, Martin and Alfred Ford, James Wheeler and William Davis who played the violin, organ and guitar.

Mrs. Polly Mecham was the first doctor in Wallsburg and used herbs as well as faith and prayer in caring for the sick. Mrs. Annie Mecham, wife of John L. Mecham, also was an early doctor in the area.

The first irrigation ditches were made by W. J. Boren and William Haws.

The first post office was directed by William E. Nuttall and the mail was carried on horseback and carriage by Dixon Greer. The mail route from Wallsburg was to "String Town" or what was later Harry Watson's farm near Charleston. Other postmasters included S. D. Greer, George Dabbling, George P. Garff, Della Mecham, Orpha Wall and Alice C. Graham. Mail carriers included Abram Penrod, Elijah Davis, Ray Boren, Ellis Boren, Willard Davis, John Wall and Roy V. Loertscher.

The first manufacturing was the production of shingles. Owner of the first shingle mill was William Nuttall. John Parcell, Enoch Richens and Elijah Davis also owned an early mill. There were many good lumber mills and carpenters, including William Ford and Martin Ford Jr., who were especially skilled at manufacturing caskets.

The first piece of machinery brought to Round Valley was a mower and reaper owned by Martin Ford, Sr.

The first shoemakers were W. J. Boren, William Haws and Luke Burdick. Mr. Boren was also a skilled cabinetmaker. Early stores were owned by Dick Camp, James Allred, Jacob Harris and Dixon Greer.

The first saw mill was owned by William Penrod, W. J. Boren and James Wheeler, William G. Nuttall and Daniel Bigelow also owned mills.

912

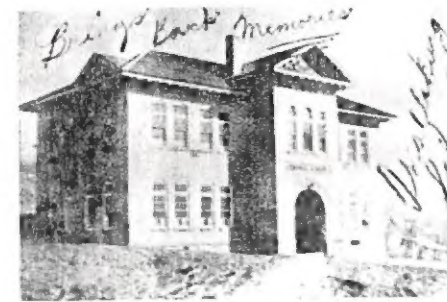
Martin Ford and William Stoker brought the first cook stoves to the valley. Prior to this all the cooking had been done in fireplaces. Cooking utensils consisted of a kettle on three legs, a bake oven and a deep frying pan 4 Aug. 1864.

Susann Wall, Enoch Gurr and John C. Greer were the first white children to be born in Round Valley 24 Feb. 1865.

Some of the first dramatists in Round Valley were Eathan A. Duke, Joseph Kerby, Polly Allred, Belle Penrod, Frank Allred, Mr. and Mrs. How Duke, Ezra Greer, Parley Ford, Earl Ford, Mark Kerby, William Ford, Gertrude Ford, John Whiting, Alfred Ford, Leone Allen, Myrtle Ford and some others.

## SCHOOLS IN WALLSBURG

A combination church house and school building constructed of logs plastered with mud was the scene of the first classwork in Wallsburg. Mrs. Lucina M. Boren taught in the small building which was located inside the fort walls.



The Wallsburg School constructed in 1904 from red sandstone and still in use.

When the community expanded outside the fort, Martin Ford's home was used as the school and Aaron Thomas, a Christian minister, served as the teacher.

Later, a combination school house and dance hall was built on property owned by George L. Batty. A second school house was built a few years later and boasted two rooms of red sandstone construction. The present school was built in 1904 by Edd Snyder, and also was of red sandstone. When the building was constructed the town was bonded for \$4,000, but the indebtedness was soon paid off and \$1,500 in cash was turned over to the Wasatch County School District when Wallsburg District was discontinued and all county schools were consolidated.

Lucina Mecham Boren began teaching in the winter of 1865 and these teachers followed: Josephine Wall Rogers, Dixon Hamlin Greer, Richard Cecil Camp, George Pickup, F. W. Hattenbrook, Aaron Thomas, all before 1875. Then D. Camp Wray, Richard J. Nuttall, Ada Glenn,

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